



HIT Safety Collaborative Issues Health IT Safe Practices: Toolkit for the Safe Use of Copy and Paste

In 2013, ECRI Institute convened the [Partnership for Health IT Patient Safety](#), a collaborative of healthcare providers, health information technology (IT) vendors, academic researchers, patient safety organizations, and professional societies, whose purpose is to work together to make health IT safer.

The *Partnership's* first workgroup, chaired by Tejal Gandhi, MD, MPH, CPPS, the CEO and president of the National Patient Safety Foundation, focused on copy and paste. The safe practice recommendations created by the copy and paste workgroup and released by the *Partnership* have been agreed upon and [supported by over 25 stakeholder organizations](#).

The *Partnership's* safe practice recommendations are:

- **Recommendation A:** Provide a mechanism to make copy and paste material easily identifiable.
- **Recommendation B:** Ensure that the provenance of copy and paste material is readily available.
- **Recommendation C:** Ensure adequate staff training and education regarding the appropriate and safe use of copy and paste.
- **Recommendation D:** Ensure that copy and paste practices are regularly monitored, measured, and assessed.

Organizations should evaluate the HIPAA or regulatory implications associated with implementing specific approaches to these recommended practices.

The *Partnership* has also released [a publicly available toolkit to help healthcare organizations implement these safe practices](#).

The recommendations are a framework within which the stakeholders both who develop and who use health IT can, individually and together, take steps toward the safer use of copy and paste and identify better uses of technology to further patient safety in areas such as documentation. The toolkit provides an opportunity and a challenge to all of the stakeholders to make copy and paste activities safer.

- **For the vendor**, the toolkit provides discussion points and direction for possible future product development. It also clarifies the concerns regarding the reuse of information and ensuring the usability of the technology and the information contained therein.
- **For healthcare organizations**, the toolkit helps with the evaluation of how copy and paste is being used in practice and assists with implementing lasting changes, even as health IT evolves.
- **For clinicians**, the toolkit raises awareness of the potential issues associated with copy and paste in documentation, provides tools to help make decisions regarding the appropriate and safe uses of copy and paste, offers alternatives to copy and paste when another function is safer, and helps ensure that when copy and paste is used, it is being used with thoughtful volition.

- **For professional organizations**, the toolkit clarifies the benefits and shortcomings of copy and paste, provides considerations for the discretionary use of copy and paste, and provides educational resources for their membership.

Please utilize and share the [Toolkit for the Safe Use of Copy and Paste](#).

Happy Patient Safety Awareness Week!

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